



THE COUNTY OF KAUAI

DEREK S. K. KAWAKAMI, MAYOR

MICHAEL A. DAHILIG, MANAGING DIRECTOR

News Release

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OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
SARAH K. BLANE, CHIEF OF STAFF
Tel (808) 241-4900
Fax (808) 241-6877

Kaua'i delegation returns from goodwill mission to Japan

LĪHU'E – Mayor Derek S. K. Kawakami returned Saturday from a nine-day goodwill mission to four cities in Japan – Iwaki, Yamaguchi, Fukuoka, and Ishigaki.

The primary purpose of his visit was to explore economic development opportunities while strengthening Kaua'i's sister city programs, engaging in discussions with other mayors, and interacting with citizens.

"This was my very first official goodwill mission overseas to visit our beloved sister cities of Japan," said Mayor Kawakami. "My goal for this trip was to strengthen and reaffirm the existing partnerships with our Sister City officials and to continue to stay connected with these cities to share our culture, education, tourism and economic opportunities."

The Mayor was accompanied by a Kaua'i County delegation which included Council Vice Chair Ross Kagawa, and Councilmember KipuKai Kuali'i, Executive Protocol Officer Kaleo Carvalho, and Tourism Specialist Nalani Brun.

"I want to thank the Mayor and the entire delegation for allowing me the opportunity to join them on this goodwill trip to Japan," said Council Vice Chair Ross Kagawa. "I was truly amazed to see the cleanliness of all of the public places and facilities in Japan, most of which is driven by the behavior and sense of pride of the local Japanese in their individual communities. We here on Kaua'i must promote this same type of mindset and in taking pride in



our communities, so that we are able to protect and perpetuate our County and State public infrastructure, facilities, and natural resources for future generations to enjoy.”

“A big mahalo to Mayor Kawakami, the Kaua‘i delegation, and most especially, the many people behind the scenes who made this trip a reality,” said Councilmember KipuKai Kuali‘i. “I felt a strong sense of pride and aloha from the warmth and hospitality we received from the Japanese people, and this reflects the strong affinity that the Japanese have for the people of Hawai‘i. The friendships and bonds reaffirmed during this trip resulted in an exchange of ideas, information, and understanding that will further strengthen our Sister City relationships for many years to come.”

During their visit to Iwaki from Sept. 26 to 29, the Kaua‘i delegation visited with Iwaki Mayor Toshio Shimizu, met with Iwaki officials at the Iwaki Chamber of Commerce, and attended the ‘Ohana Hula Festival. While in Yamaguchi from Sept. 29 to Oct. 1, visits were held with Governor Tsugumasa Muraoka, Mayor Takumi Shiiki of Suo Oshima, Mayor Yoshihiko Fukuda of Iwakuni, Mayor Masaaki Yonemoto of Waki and many other officials. On their way to visit Ishigaki, the delegation stopped in Fukuoka from Oct. 1 to 2, where they met with Fukuoka Vice Governor Masaru Eguchi. The final leg of the trip was from Oct. 2 to 5, in Ishigaki, Okinawa, where the delegation commemorated the 20th Anniversary Reaffirmation Ceremony of the Ishigaki-Kaua‘i Sister City Signing. They also attended Ishigaki’s first Islander Summit where Mayor Kawakami gave opening remarks and participated in a panel discussion with other guests from Bail, Sardinia, and Ishigaki.

While in Yamaguchi, Mayor Kawakami met Congressman Nobuo Kishi who represents Suo Oshima, Kaua‘i’s sister city. Mr. Kishi was on Kaua‘i in August for official business and made time for a courtesy visit with Mayor Kawakami to congratulate him as the new mayor of Kaua‘i.

Gov. Muraoka and his executive staff and six members of Yamaguchi Assembly of Representatives will arrive on Kaua'i on Oct. 17 for official business and will also attend the Matsuri Kaua'i Festival on Oct. 18 and 19.

A sister city, county, or state relationship is a broad-based, long-term partnership between two communities in two countries, according to Sister Cities International. Sister Cities International was created at President Eisenhower's 1956 White House summit on citizen diplomacy, where he envisioned a network that would be a champion for peace and prosperity by fostering bonds between people from different communities around the world.



Mayor Kawakami, Council Vice Chair Kagawa, Councilmember KipuKai Kuali'i, and the Kaua'i delegation met with officials of Iwaki City during their first stop of their goodwill trip to Japan.



The Kaua'i delegation attended the 'Ohana Hula Festival where Mayor Kawakami gave remarks at its opening ceremony.



The Hawaiian culture was celebrated at the 'Ohana Hula Festival in Iwaki, Japan.



While in Yamaguchi, Governor Tsugumasa Muraoka hosted a dinner for the Kaua'i delegation with other state officials.



Mayor Kawakami meets Fukuoka Vice Governor Masaru Eguchi.



During their visit to Ishigaka, Okinawa, the Kaua‘i delegation commemorated the 20th Anniversary Reaffirmation Ceremony of the Ishigaki-Kaua‘i Sister City Signing, where they also attended a special tree planting ceremony. The trip concluded with Ishigaki’s first Islander Summit where Mayor Kawakami gave opening remarks and participated in a panel discussion on the similarities and challenges that face various island communities.



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